

Child Disciplinary Practices at Home. Evidence from a Range of Low- and Middle-Income Countries



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Expert consultation on data and research on violence against children,
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Objectives and data sources

- Findings based on data from UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)
- Data on discipline collected (thought representative samples) for more than 500,000 children using 25 different languages
- Describe levels of violent and non-violent practices
- Identify risk and protective factors

Methods

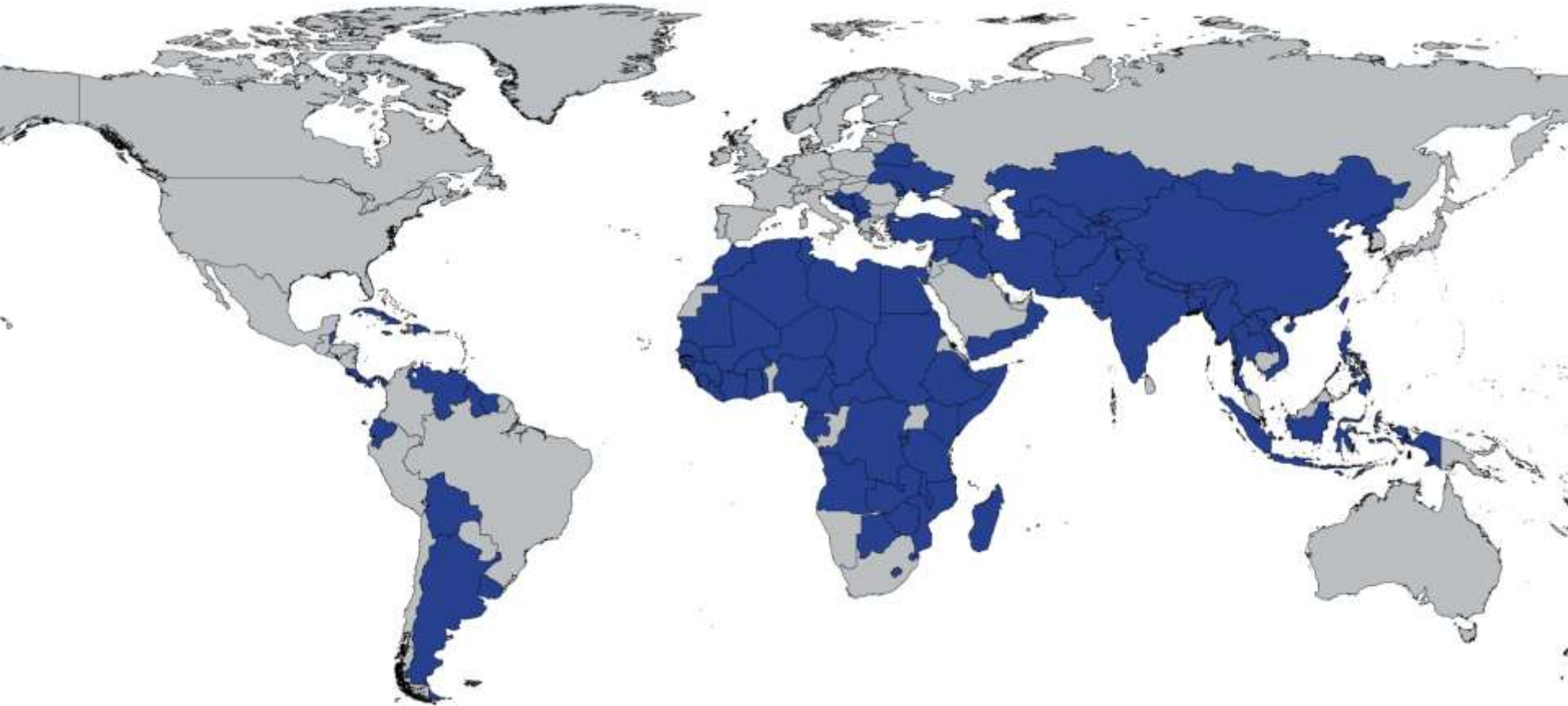


UNICEF's support for data collection: MICS

- Household surveys designed to assist countries in collecting reliable and internationally comparable data on children and women and to provide evidence base for improved policy formulation, programme planning and advocacy
- Key data source for monitoring the WSC goals, the MDGs, the World Fit for Children goals, and other major international commitments
- More than 100 indicators (nutrition, child health, mortality, child protection, education, HIV, etc.)
- Data available by background characteristics (sex, ethnicity, wealth, education, etc.) and at the sub-national level

Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)

Since 1995, more than 100 countries and more than 230 surveys*



*Countries with at least one MICS survey, including sub-national as well as ongoing surveys as of January 2012

MICS methodology

Survey tools

Developed by UNICEF after consultations with relevant experts from various UN organizations as well as with interagency monitoring groups.

Implementation and capacity building

Surveys carried out by government organizations, with the support and assistance of UNICEF and other partners.

Technical assistance and training provided through regional workshops

Child Discipline Module

- Questions addressed to family relatives/mothers or primary caregivers of one randomly selected child aged 2 to 14 years old
- The questionnaire asked whether *any* member of the household had used any of various disciplinary practices with that child during the past month
- 8 violent disciplinary practices: 2 psychological (such as shouting and name calling); 6 physical (such as shaking, spanking and hitting with an implement)
- 3 non-violent disciplinary practices (such as taking away privileges and explaining why something is wrong)
- Assesses mother/primary caregivers' attitude toward physical punishment

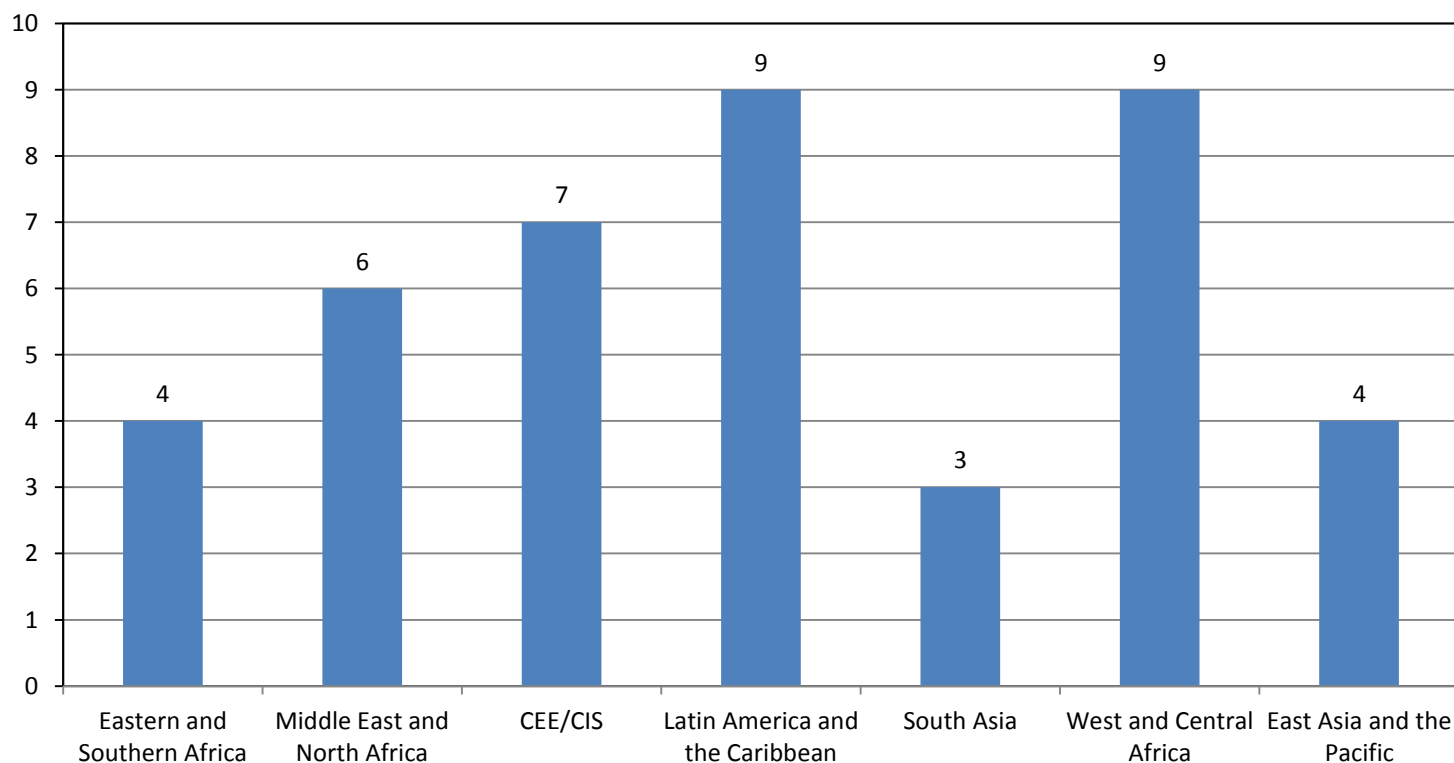
Child Discipline Module in MICS and DHS surveys

- MICS3 (2005-2007) 33 countries
- MICS4 (2010-2012) 42 countries (47 surveys)
- By including a module on Child Discipline, MICS has become the largest sources of comparable data on child disciplinary practices for the developing world
- Same module used in some DHS surveys

DHS (2006-2009): 5 countries (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Liberia)

MICS4 countries with data on child discipline

Number of MICS4 countries with data on child discipline, by UNICEF region

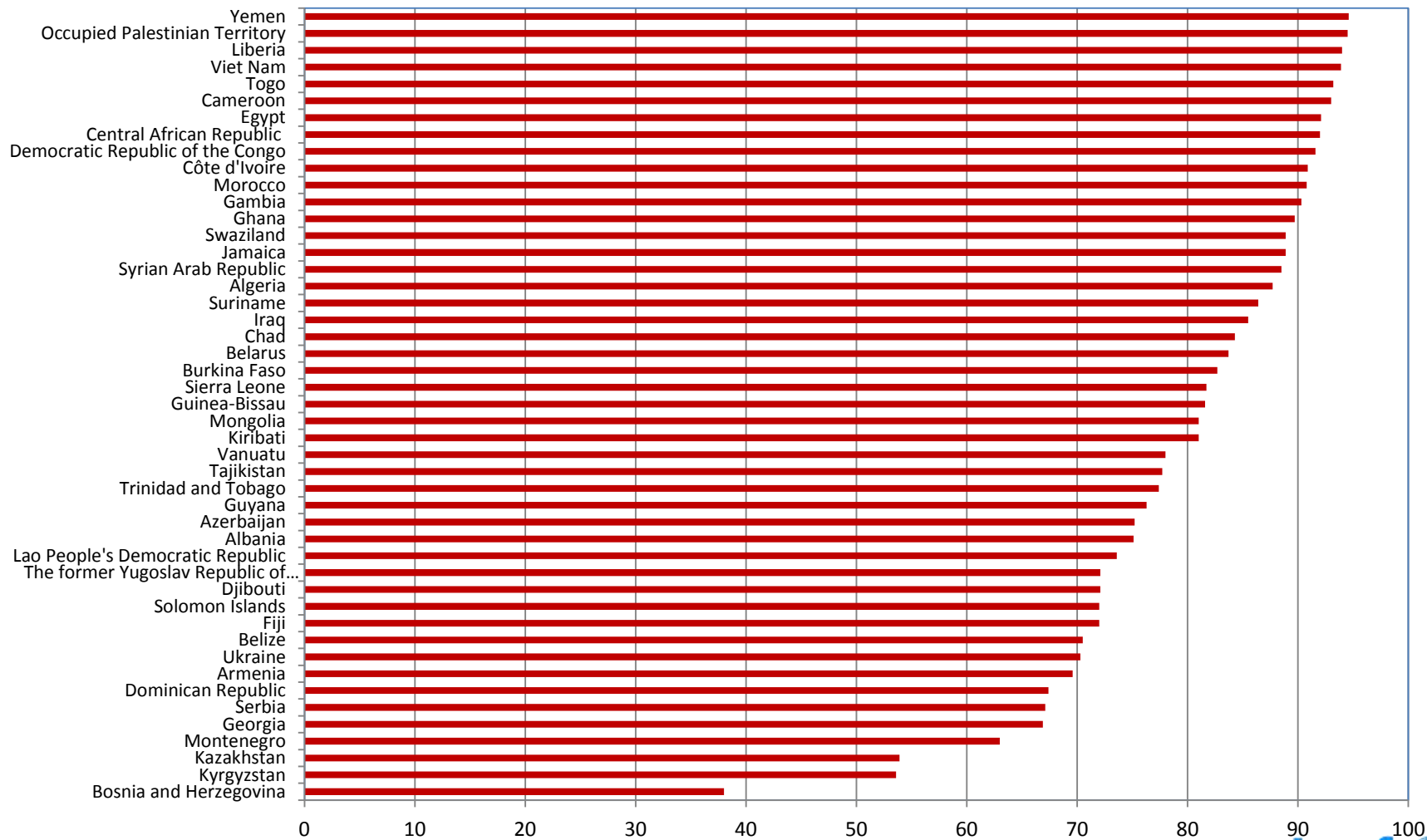


Results



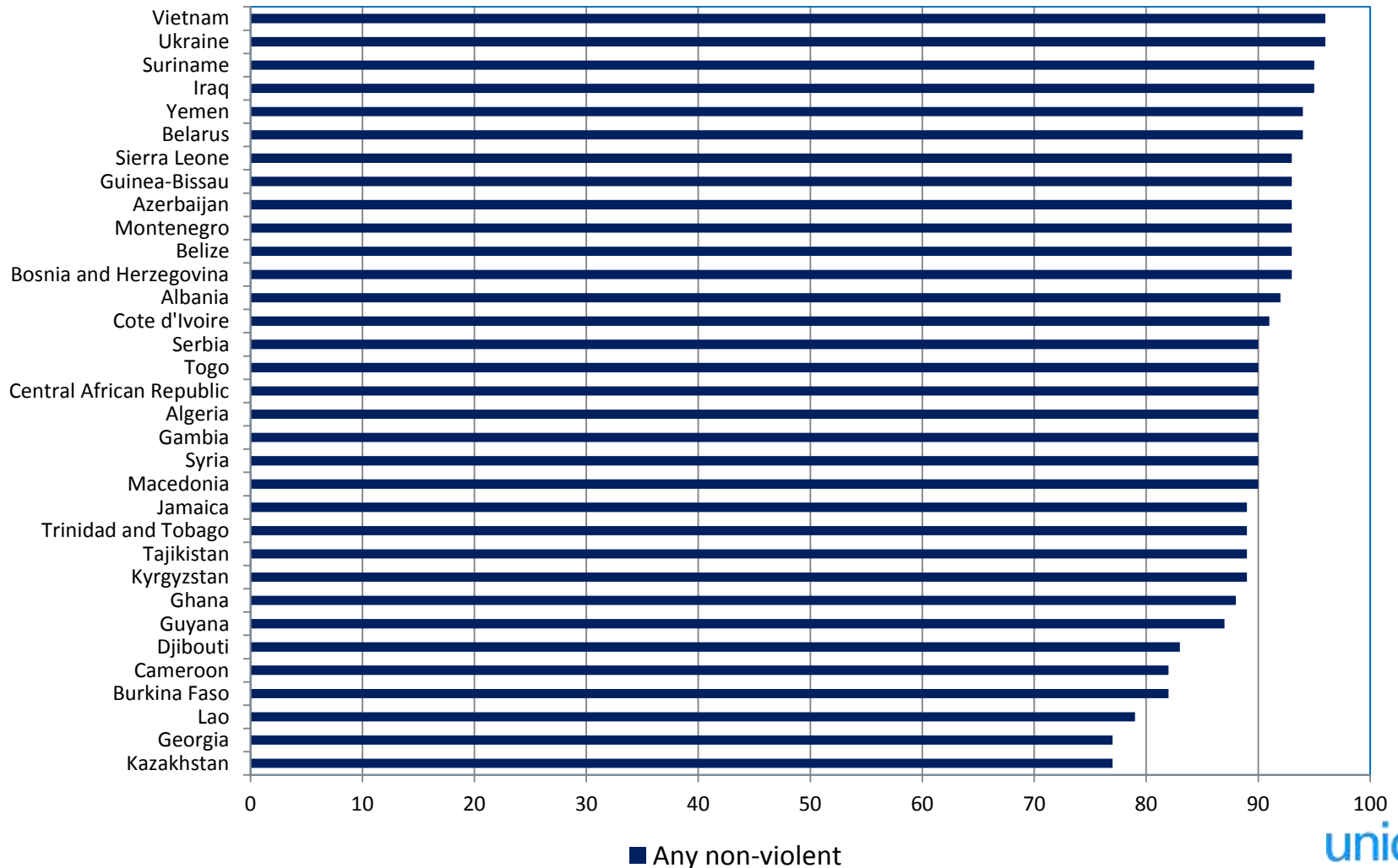
Violent discipline is widespread in most countries

Percentage of children aged 2–14 who have experienced violent discipline in the past month, 2005–2010



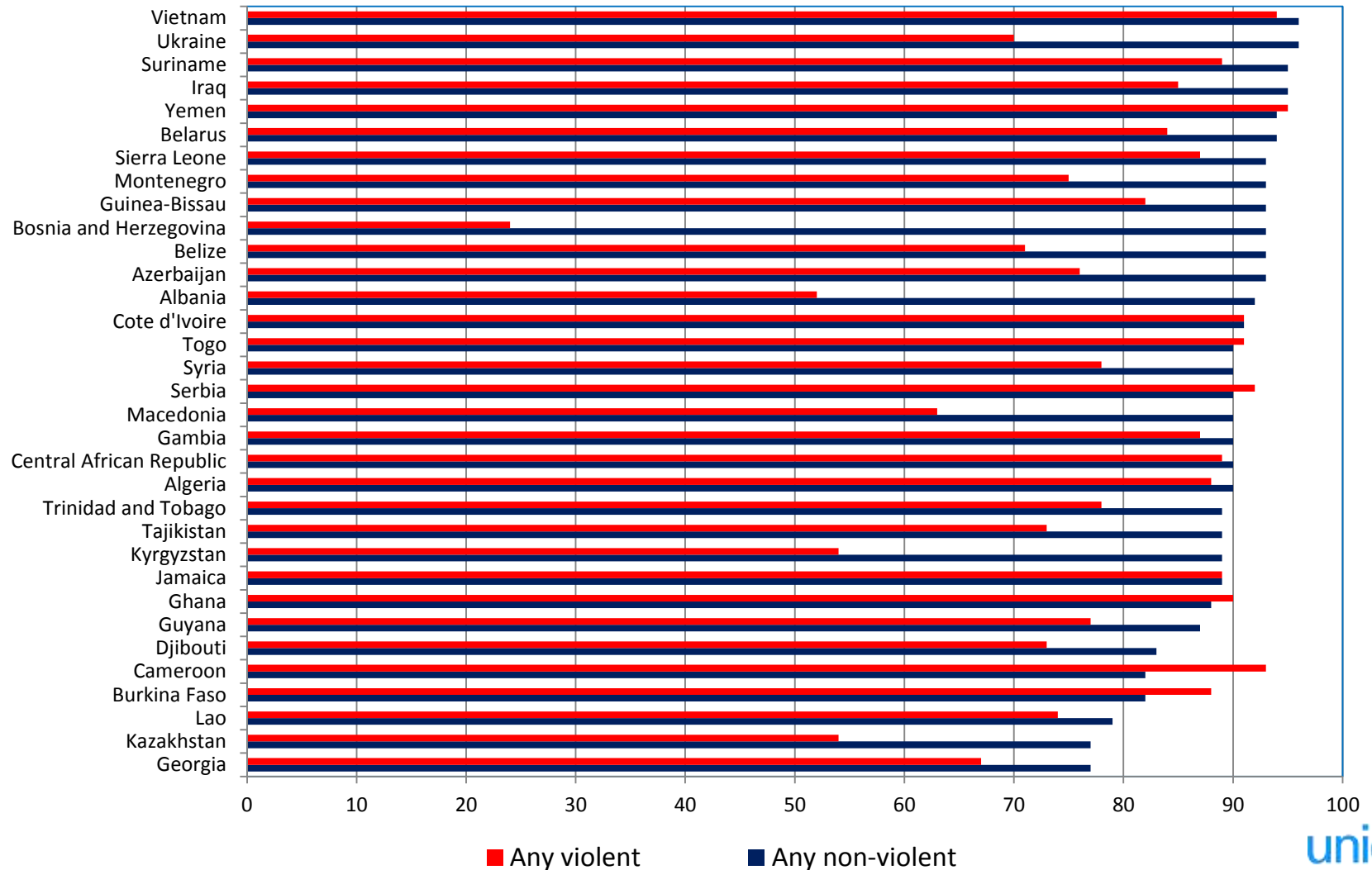
Non-violent methods used with almost all children

Percentage of children aged 2–14 who have experienced any non-violent discipline in the past month, 2005–2010



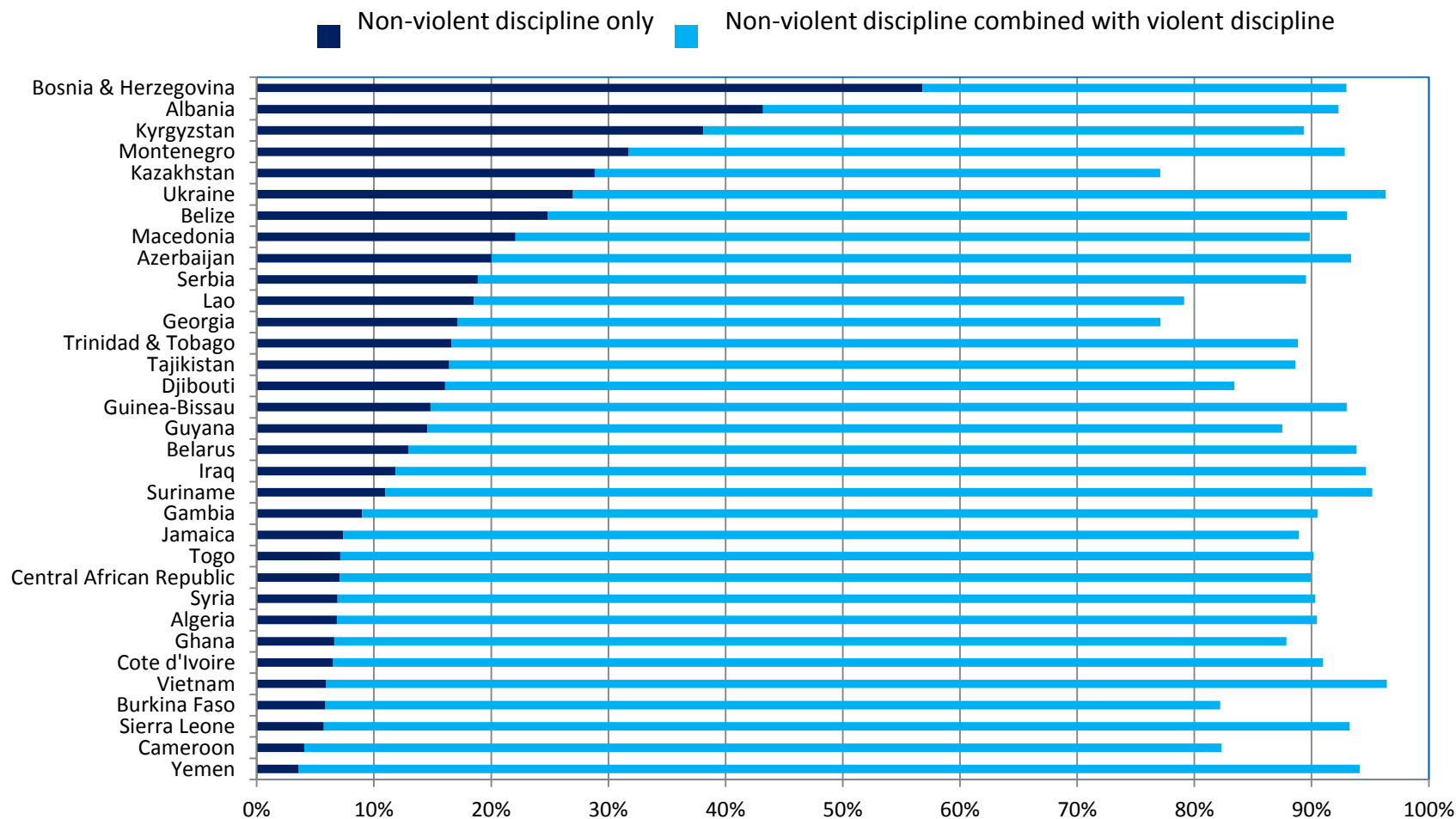
Non-violent methods are the most common form of discipline

Percentage of children aged 2–14 who have experienced any violent and any non-violent discipline in the past month, 2005–2006



Most households use both non-violent and violent disciplinary practices

Percentage of children aged 2–14 who have experienced only non-violent discipline and both non-violent and violent discipline in the past month, 2005–2006



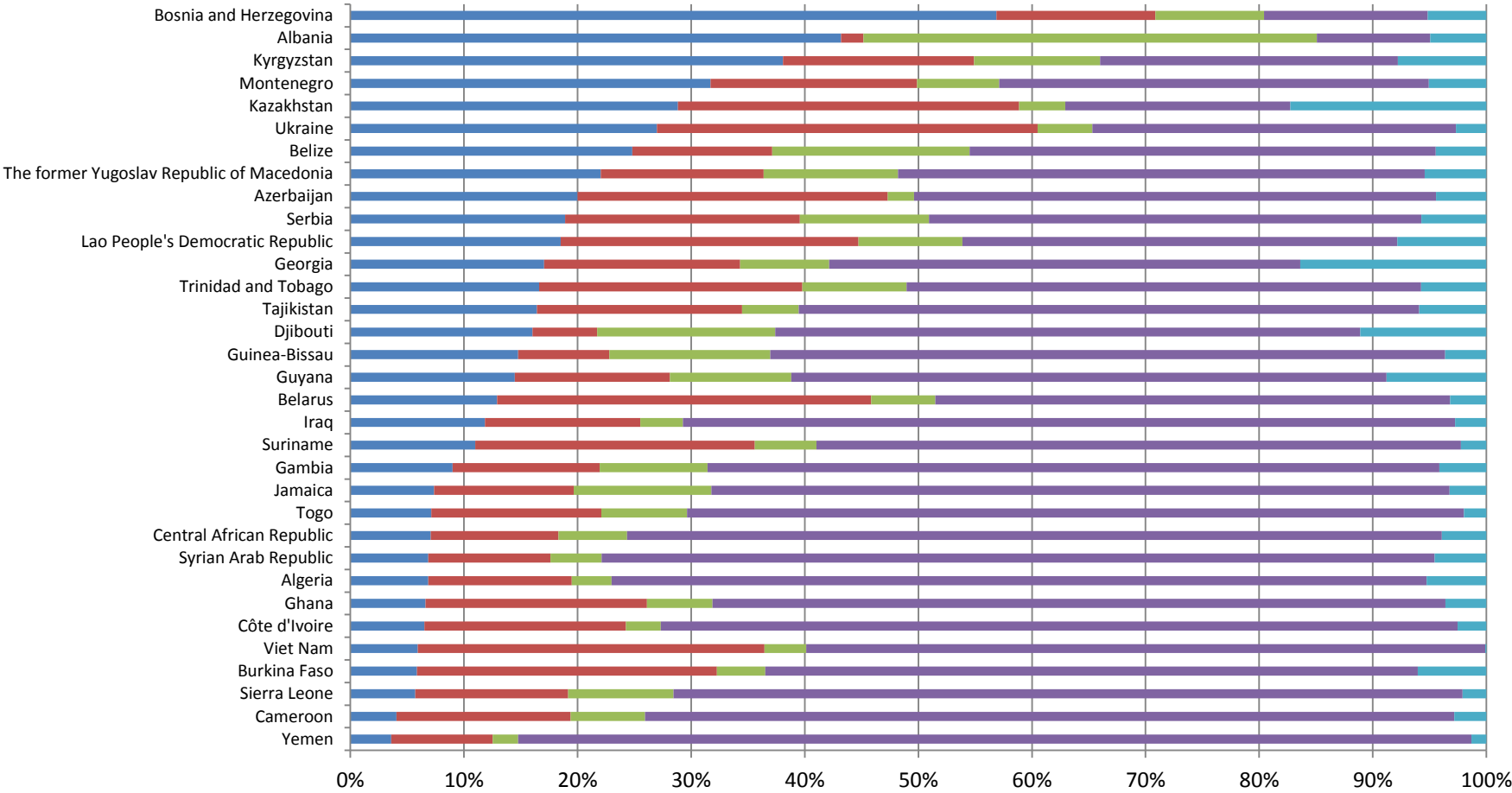
Shouting/yelling is the most common form of violent discipline

Table 7. Percentage of children aged 2–14 who experienced specific forms of violent discipline in the past month, 2005–2006

Violent disciplinary practice	Estimate
Shook him/her	35
Shouted, yelled at or screamed at him/her	73
Spanked, hit or slapped him/her with bare hand	27
Hit him/her on the bottom or elsewhere on the body with something like a belt, hairbrush, stick or other hard object	4
Called him/her dumb, lazy or another name like that	22
Hit or slapped him/her on the face, head or ears	16
Hit or slapped him/her on the hand, arm or legs	20
Beat him/her up with an implement (hit over and over as hard as one could)	4

Psychological aggression and physical punishment go hand in hand

- Only non-violent discipline
- Psychological aggression without physical punishment
- Physical punishment without psychological aggression
- Both psychological aggression and physical punishment
- No form of discipline listed in Child Discipline Module



Risk and Protective Factors



All children, regardless of their personal characteristics and family background, are at risk of violent discipline

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

- Family wealth
- Family & primary caregiver's education
- Number of household members
- Place of residence (urban/rural)
- Living arrangement (child living with mother only, father only, both, neither)
- Caregiver age (under 30/ 30-39/ 40+)
- Marital status

CHILD CHARACTERISTICS

- Child sex
- Child age
- Engagement in child labour

CAREGIVER BEHAVIORS

- Non-adult care
- Children's & non-children's books
- Educational & play activities

Risk and Protective Factors: Child characteristics



Child sex

- In about half of the countries surveyed (17 out of 33), there is no difference in the prevalence of violent discipline between boys and girls
- In the remaining 16 countries, boys are more likely to be subject to violent disciplinary practices, but differences remain small

	N = 16	
	Males	Females
Weighted average	78	72

Risk and Protective Factors: Family characteristics



Family Wealth

- Definition:
 - Wealthiest 40 percent and poorest 60 percent
 - Relative not absolute wealth is measured

- In more than half of the countries with available data (17 out of 30), there is no difference in the prevalence of violent discipline between poorest and wealthiest children

- In the rest of countries (12 out of the 30), children from the poorest 60 percent of households are more likely to receive a violent discipline, but overall differences remain small

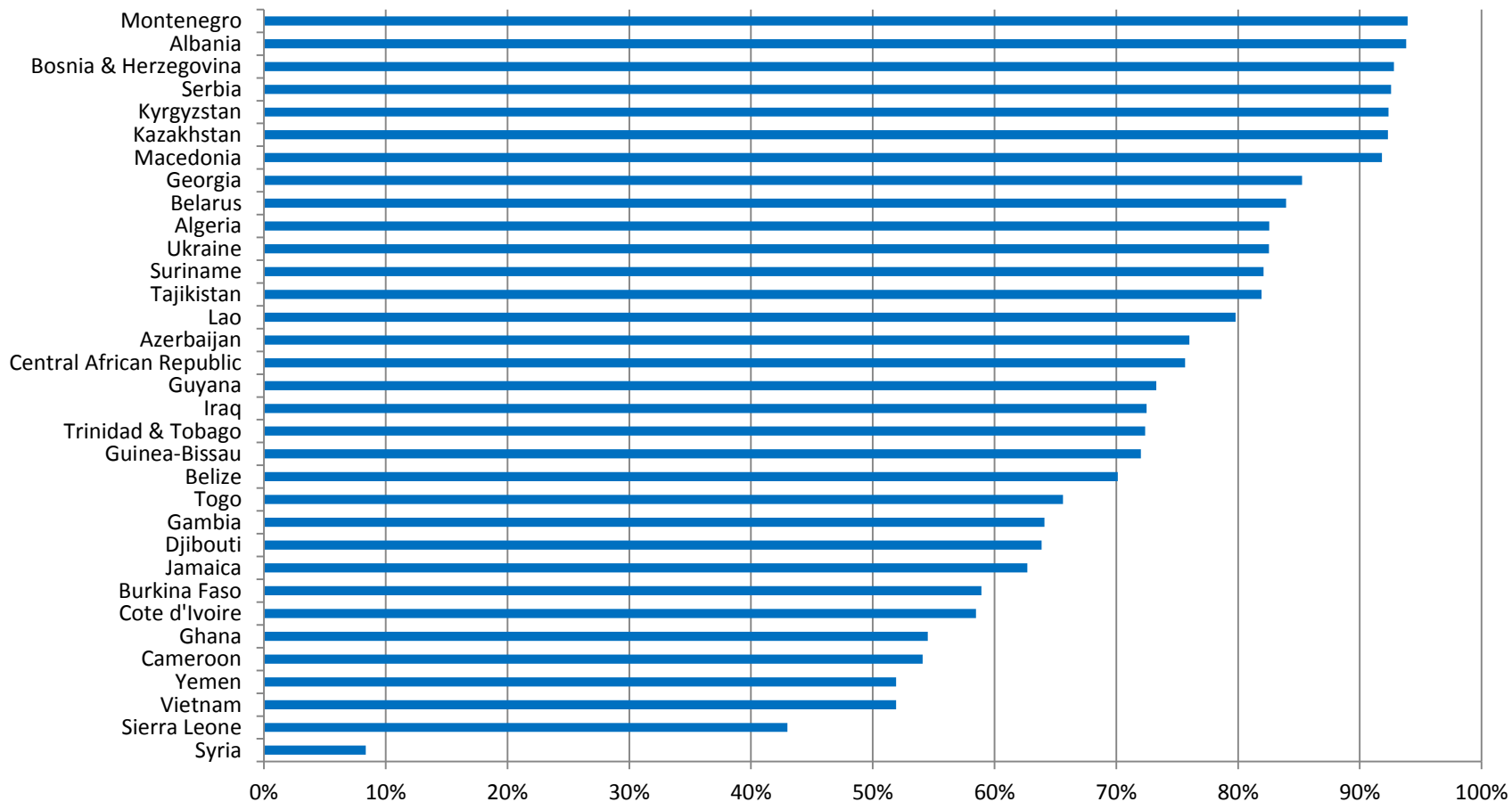
	N = 12	
	Poorest 60%	Wealthiest 40%
Weighted average	77	70

Attitudes toward physical punishment



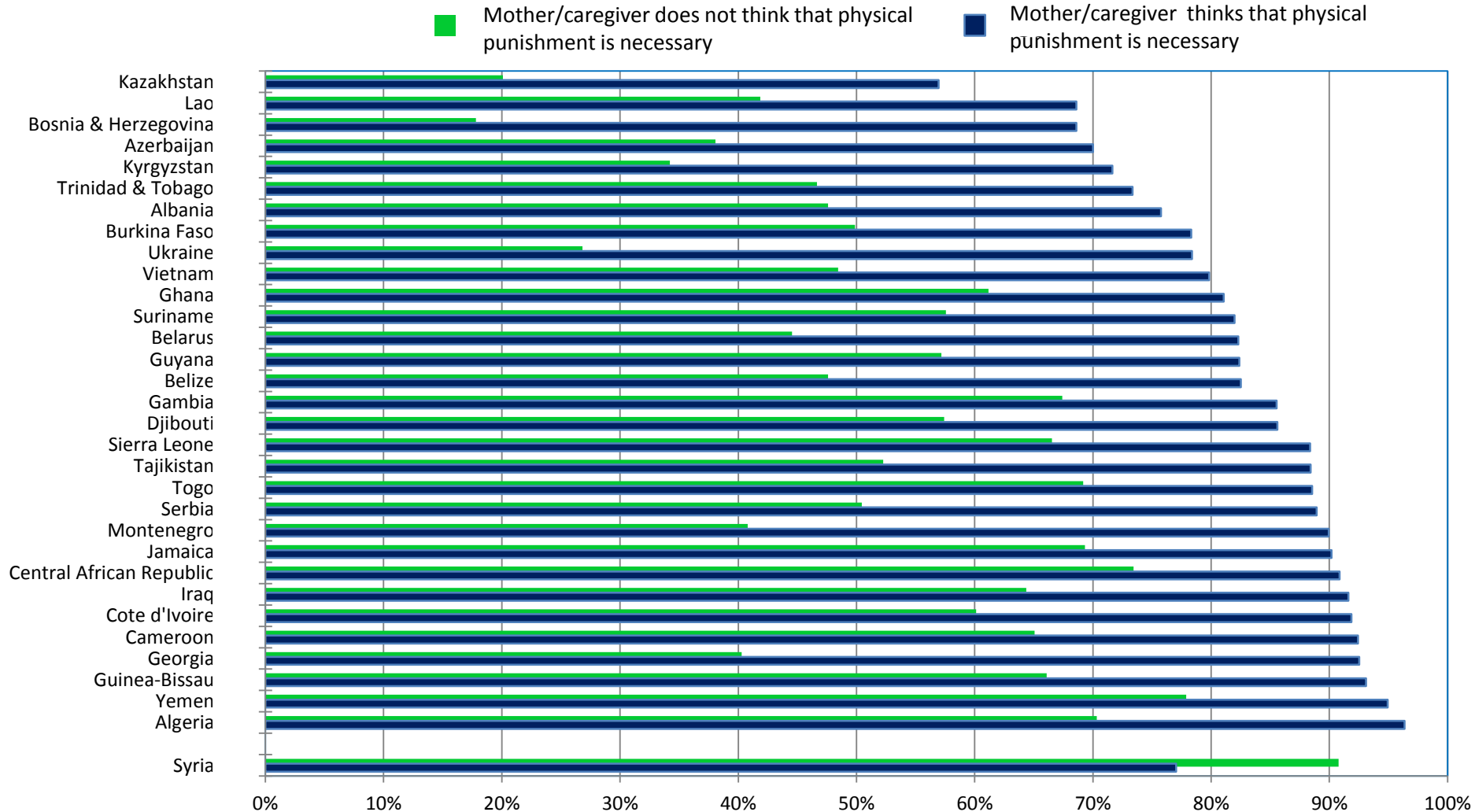
The large majority of mothers/primary caregivers do not think that physical punishment is necessary

Percentage of mothers or primary caregivers who do not think that physical punishment is necessary, by country, 2005-2006



When a mother thinks that physical punishment is necessary, her children are significantly more at risk of violent discipline

Percentage of children aged 2–14 who experienced physical punishment in the past month according to the mother's or primary caregiver's belief in the need for physical punishment, by country, 2005–2006



Implications

- Violent disciplinary practices are widespread
- When the mother thinks that physical punishment is necessary, her children are significantly more at risk of violent discipline
- This means that changing attitudes is important
- However, the findings also suggest that among children whose mothers do **not** think physical punishment is necessary, a large proportion are still experiencing it
- This suggests that changing attitudes may not always be sufficient to prevent physical punishment, as many children of mothers/caregivers who do not think it is necessary are still subject to it

Thank you



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